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Bibliotheca Curiosa.

ON THE ORIGIN
OF THE
NATIVE RACES OF AMERICA.

A Dissertation
BY HUGO GROTIUS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A Treatise
ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES
AND
UNKNOWN ISLANDS.
BY PETER ALBINUS.

*Translated from the original Latin, and enriched with
Biographical Notes and Illustrations*

BY
EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.

PRIVATELY PRINTED, EDINBURGH.

1816.





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INTRODUCTION.



It had originally been my intention to give the Latin text of the two following tracts, with an English version in small type at the foot of each page; but as nearly all the subscribers to the work expressed their wish to make the book an English one with ample notes and elucidations, I determined to yield to their desires, although the notes involved many days of careful labour and research. I have therefore omitted the Latin text, and devoted the space thus gained to biographical and, so far as was possible, to bibliographical notes. In editing the two pamphlets I have been greatly assisted by Lieutenant S. Hughes, R.N., to whom I offer my warmest thanks. His professional knowledge has been invaluable to me in those portions of the work which deal with navigation.

The first tract, by the celebrated Hugo Grotius, first appeared in 1542, 4to, without printer's name. It attempts to define the origin of the

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HUGO GROTIUS'S DISSERTATION
ON THE ORIGIN OF THE
AMERICAN RACES.



I SEE that the ancients, as well those who have described countries as those who have recorded events, have laid much stress on this point, that they, either from ancient monuments if possible, or, where these were wanting, from traditions or conjecture, have instructed us as to whence the people came who first inhabited certain lands. So Dionysius Halicarnassus, greatly overstepping the diligence of all the Italians, has shown to us, from the monuments of the Greeks, to which he has also added other evidences, the origin of the tribes which first possessed Italy. So Sallust inquires who first settled in Africa ; so, also, Tacitus, who in Britain—the former from old traditions, the latter partly from tradition, partly from conjecture, which he based upon a consideration of the language, dress, and customs. In Strabo, a man of great discernment, there are many inquiries of

this sort. Such being the case, I have often wondered that no one from among so many learned men of our age has earnestly investigated whence those nations sprung which, before the advent of the Spaniards, inhabited the continent, which, unknown to the ancients, some of us have called America from Vespuccius, others Western India, which extends from the Northern Ocean to the Straits of Magellan—a tract very long and broad, indeed—lying between the Atlantic sea and another, which washes China, and is known to some as the Pacific, and to others as of the South. I, since I have read several of the Spanish, French, British, and Dutch writers who have been in those lands, have thought that I would not undertake a fruitless task if I communicated, what appears to me to be most probable, both to persons now living and to posterity, with the intention of stirring up others who may possess a greater knowledge of these events, whether by travel in that quarter of the globe or even by books which have come into their hands, either to confirm my conclusions, or to refute them by valid reasoning. I see that there are many who think that all those tribes were from Scythia—which we now call Great Tartary. They base their argument on this, that at Anianus*—be it a strait or a bay (for which of the two it is not clear)

* Behring's Straits, evidently.

—there is no great space between Tartary and America. Now, if it is a gulf the lands must be contiguous, and in that case the passage would be easy ; if it is a strait, it becomes more narrow the farther it is entered, and the opposite coasts, just like those of the Hellespont, or of the Bosphorus, in Thrace, forbids navigation even for merchant vessels.* These very weighty considerations when regarded, so to speak, on the skin (superficially), wear an aspect of truth, but when viewed from within do not convince me. For it is certain that before the arrival of the Spaniards there were no horses in all America. Now Scythia is a country always full of horses, and almost all the Scythians are accustomed to ride on horseback, and to accomplish immense distances by their aid, and they even suck the blood of their horses when drink of another kind fails. And if America and Tartary were united together, the horses, either in flying or feeding freely, would have long ago forced their way from Tartary into America, just as it is certain, from the narrative of the Spaniards, that from the time they brought horses there they penetrated from some countries of America into others, separated though they were by great mountains. But if a continual strait intervened, as I rather believe, Tartary never had navigators, and if she had had them,

* This passage seems either obscure or ridiculous.

never would they have crossed without horses, or been content to remain long without them, any more than the old Gauls who crossed into Britain, or the Spaniards into America. I, as I shall say what approves itself most to me, will first dispose of the peoples of America, those who are towards the north on this side the Isthmus, which is between Nomen Dei* and Panama, and those who stretch beyond that strait to the south, until they disappear in the Straits of Magellan. I am of opinion that almost all those tribes who are on this side the Isthmus of Panama are of Norse descent, being led to it by the following considerations. That Iceland was inhabited by Norsemen, the monuments of both peoples, their traditions, language, and the most ancient rule of Norway over the Icelanders clearly show. Now many are believed to have migrated there before the year 1000, when the religion of Norway was still heathen.† From Iceland they went into Greenland, which some consider an island, others a part of the continent of America. There, likewise, the language is the same; formerly the government was the same. Frisland is near to it, on which the commentary of the Zenos of Venice exists, unless, perhaps, it is a part of either Iceland

* I cannot trace this place. Can Colon be meant?

† An account of the fabulous (?) discovery of America by the Norsemen will be found in vol. iii. of Hakluyt's voyages, edition 1598 1600.

or Greenland. Next to this is Estotiland, a part of the American continent, to which fishermen from Frisland resorted two centuries before the Spaniard came into the New World. All these words have the same ending, the sound denoting the country in the language of the Germans, of whom the Norsemen were formerly a part, as appears from Pliny, Tacitus, nay, from the language itself and from their manners. So, also, the lands which stretch from this point to the Isthmus of Panama have names similar in sound, Cimatlan, Coatlan, Guecoslan, Artlan, Quaxutatlan, Zerotlan, Icatlan, Tapatlan, Cinacatlan, Cinantlan, Tenuchitlan, Comillan, Metzitlan, Guatitlan, Necotitlan, Magitlan, Tunoxcaltitlan, Ocotlan, Atilan, Curcatalan, in all which words the pronunciation of the Spaniards has dropped the last letter. The Mexicans and their neighbours, as soon as the Spaniards came there, said that they were not natives, but that their ancestors had come from the north. The district in which they first settled after Estotilandia now, likewise, retains the name of its origin, for it is called Norimbega, which is nothing else than Norway, it being softened in sound by the Spaniards, who are accustomed to place B for VV. And towards California there is a people possessed of the same language and customs with that of Mexico, and there is the people of Alavardus, that is Langobardus. The Spaniards call it New Mexico, when in truth it is

Old Mexico, from which they came into the other, as they say, 800 years before. Words are added, many of which were German, that is, Norwegian, but there are few which in their course have come to our knowledge. Teut, the god of Germany, is the same also among those nations, Ba-god, the lesser, an imaginary god ; Guaira, Waiert, the lash ; Top-hos, the covering of the head ; Lame, Lam, the lamb. Places situated beside streams end in Peke, for Beke,* which is stream among the Germans. Whoever has a mind to inquire into these things will discover more resemblances. Their customs likewise afford no slight mark of their origin. Their judges are twelve in number, as there were formerly among the Goths and other nations of Scandinavia ; and their neighbours, the Saxons, whence the number was introduced into England.† They spent their life in hunting, as the Mexicans used to say of their ancestors. The reckoning of time by nights, the washing of newly-born infants in running water, their belief in dice, even to the loss of liberty—all these you will learn from Tacitus and the German writers, were customs of Germany. A man was permitted to have only one wife, with the exception of a few of the nobles, an ordinance which the same Tacitus

* Beck is still used for a mountain stream in many parts of England.

† An allusion, no doubt, to our jury system.

attributes to the Germans, so that this mark distinguishes them from the other barbarians ; since, on the contrary, among the Scythians, from time immemorial, it was usual that a man should have more than one wife. Marriage is permissible to their women, as to the Germans, only once. Posts in Florida have been set up for the ascertainment of the maximum heat, such as Pliny informs us the Cauchi had. From time immemorial they believed that the soul survived the body, a doctrine which Lucan attributed to the tribes which he despises as Arctic. Criminals were severely punished in their persons. You have the same practice also alluded to by Tacitus respecting the Germans, which explains the reference of Quintilian in his speech on behalf of Marianus, the soldier who had murdered the Tribune : "They by the ocean live more sacredly." There was a chair and a table for every individual by the hearth ; sons were the heirs of sisters, their bodies were almost naked, unless where modesty forbids it, and there were other customs similar to those which Tacitus has described regarding the Germans. Now, these having been found in the places of which we are treating, indicate, it is clear, a German, not a Scythian origin.* Even to sacrificing men to the

* The argument might hold good so far as a common Indo-European origin is concerned.

Gods is a German custom, upon which as the savageness became more developed, there supervened the practice of feeding upon human flesh. Now, in what I have just said as to these tribes on this side the Isthmus of Panama being almost all of Norwegian origin, I have not spoken in vain. For as to those who possess Yucatan, and some neighbouring districts, the rite of circumcision discovered among them proves to us that they are of a different origin. Many said from this that they had been rescued from the sea, and have for that reason believed that they were Jews, forsooth of the ten tribes driven into Media; that they thence wandered through Tartary into America, by that long road of which reference, they think, is made in the fourth Book, called the Book of Esdra. Although these particulars have been thus piled together, and although they have succeeded in extorting the assent of many, yet they do not approve themselves to me. The writer of the Fourth of Esdra has his head full of vain dreams, and accordingly has been rejected by all. Nor is it America to which he says the Jews went, a land at that time unknown, not less to himself than to all others, but a kingdom which the Jews founded for themselves beyond the Sabbatick stream,* as they say, by the Caspian gates, from which no news, no letter ever came;

* Query, Oxus.

which no one has ever seen, nor ever will see, for it was only discovered by the Rabbinic hair-splitters, that the promises regarding the everlasting continuance of the kingdom in the seed of David, in Jesus Christ, might not be fulfilled, and may be believed to be still unfulfilled. Neither is it true that the Jews were in Tartary. And as to some thinking that they have discovered there the names of the Hebrew tribes, the words are old Scythian, as Euthalitæ, not Nephtalitæ, and so on, as learned men have made abundantly manifest. Now, as regards Yucatan and the regions adjacent, the first settlers hand down that circumcision was devised there, also that the other rites of the Jewish law were not practised, nor that mode of writing letters, which from early times was in use among the Jews. Now, circumcision extends beyond, and is of much wider extent than Judaism; and as to their saying that they are descended from men saved from the sea, you may justly refer that, not to the Red Sea, but to the tradition of the universal Deluge, traces of which are found among all tribes. Consult what we have written on that topic in the Notes to the First Book on the Truth of the Christian Religion. Peter the Martyr has hit the point when he said that he did not doubt but some were conveyed there from Æthiopia by the adjacent ocean, which might easily happen to fishermen sailing a certain distance from their own coast, and then caught by

the furious winds, which would carry them directly into America—such a fate as befell that sailor from whom Columbus derived his knowledge of the new world, and those Indians who, Pliny informs us, were borne to the shores of the Suevi. Now, to be circumcised is an old practice of the Æthiopians, as Herodotus, before others, has testified, the reasons for which proceeding we have treated of in the aforesaid treatise. Nor did those of the Æthiopians who became Christians abandon the old practice of their race, as Alvarez and others inform us. By the Æthiopian there is a pronunciation of the letter which answers to the Hebrew ך. But it is not so old as the transplantation of the colony from Æthiopia into those lands, but 500 years old, as they themselves said. Now, the rule of the Abyssinians at that time extended to the ocean. And that the Æthiopians who came there were Christians, we gather from the rite of baptism, which the Yucatans administered to their infants after their third year, like the Greeks and Asiatics, and they called it regeneration; and the parents of the infant, in order to celebrate it duly, made preparation with prayers, fasting, and purification. We are led to the same conclusion by the like celebration in Yucatan of extreme unction, the confession of sins in sickness, honourable burial, and a firm belief in rewards and punishments after this life. Nor,



indeed, ought it to appear wonderful that other things appertaining to a Christian should fall into disuse through the lapse of time, the want of priests there, and the negligence of the people, when we see the same thing happen in Dioscoridis, an island of the Red Sea, which they now call Socotra, where those who were there after Paul, the Venetian,* could discover nothing left of the Christian religion, of old established there, but baptism and the sign of the cross. Now that the language is neither clearly Æthiopian nor clearly Norwegian, in the range of country from the North to the Isthmus of Panama, I believe, has resulted from the following causes : first, that men of different races were mingled together ; secondly, that most of them lived without a common government, after the manner of the Cyclops ; it now likewise prevails in Florida, as 600 years before it prevailed in Mexico and other regions, the consequence of which was that individual families framed a vocabulary specially for themselves.

I come now to the other part of America which

* Better known as Fra Paolo, or Paul Sarpi, the citizen monk of Venice, who has been said to have been a Catholic in general but a Protestant in particular. His attempted assassination on the Piazza of St. Mark at Venice, by order of Paul V., the Pope, is still one of the favourite legends of the City of Gondolas. He is said to have discovered the circulation of the blood. The allusion in the text is from his "Prince," a work translated and published by the Abbé de Marsy. Paul died in 1623.

extends from the Isthmus of Panama to the Straits of Magellan. All who have written of this tract of country agree that the people, in carriage, manners, and language, agree with those who have their settlements beyond that neck of land. Wherefore it is allowable for us to believe that the men on this side are descended from those on the other side of the isthmus, and the more so that the Peruvians have always said that the men in that part of the world were of foreign extraction. Now, it is credible that the old inhabitants had heard that the part of the world which is across the Straits,* and which then stretches through a long tract, composed partly of continuous land and partly of small indenting inlets, under the name of New Guinea, till within view of Gilolus, Java, and other islands of the Indian Ocean, and is all called the Austral Continent in the maps, had received its primitive inhabitants from Java, Gilolus, &c. But the more highly-refined minds of the Peruvians, their capacity for just and extended government, testify to another origin, which, if I see anything, can be no other than from the Chinese, a race of equal elegance and equal imperial ability. This is confirmed by the remains of the Chinese ships, which, according to the report of the Spaniards, have

* The Strait is evidently Grotius's idea of the Pacific west of South America !

been discovered on the shore of the Pacific Sea. Nor is there any cause for wonder if the Chinese, being well versed in navigation, have been induced to penetrate into lands separated from them by a single sea, either by the curiosity of exploring them, or by necessity, the great propagator of the human race. The worship of the sun prevailed among the Peruvians before the arrival of the Spaniards, the same which from time immemorial formed the chief worship among the Chinese. And just as the King of the Chinese says, that he is the child of the sun, so also the Incas of Peru have said that they are the lords of empire. The writing of the Peruvians is not by means of letters, but by marks denoting the things, and it is, as in China, from the top of the paper to the bottom. I am likewise of opinion that Man-cacapacus was a Chinese, who, as he was a man of wonderful genius and spirit, learning that men of his own race were in possession of good lands across the sea, but were subject to no common rule, crossed over there, collected them, scattered as they were, into a body, and set up a Government for them and their posterity on the model of the Government of China. Now in that, neither near the isthmus has the language of the Asiatic Indians, nor in the Peruvian country has that of China, continued uncorrupted. This, I think, can be accounted for on the same supposition I have already made for the change of languages

on this side the Isthmus of Panama. These are the facts which I have been able to collect, some of them from conjecture, regarding the origin of the American races; and if anyone has more accurate knowledge to communicate, I shall enjoy the advantage of an exchange of thought, and for that advantage will return thanks.





A TREATISE ON
FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
UNKNOWN ISLANDS.





A TREATISE
ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
UNKNOWN ISLANDS.



I HAVE deemed it worth my while to set forth at some length my views regarding the two greatest events of this latest age, and the tokens, unmistakable, one may believe, of the last day, and the state of innocence to which we are shortly to return. Two only I shall name, "The Extended Navigation into Unknown Islands, and the Study and Knowledge of Foreign Tongues."

Well, I am of opinion, along with others, that very great wonders are now taking place, signs, if you will, that the last day is perhaps about to come upon us forthwith, these signs being, as some people add, portents and evidences that the Christian religion is in a short time to spread over the terrestrial globe; first, because for many years the whole globe was so traversed, first, by simple ships, and afterwards by fleets, that in the case of the Atlantic itself, wheresoever it was

even in his day he heard men speaking in divers tongues. Now this man was a disciple of Polycarp, himself a disciple of John the Evangelist, and bishop of the Church of Smyrna, a man greatly distinguished for his learning, piety, and for his zeal for the glory for the Son of God. Eusebius has written about both disciple and master. It was then that the gift became restricted to a few, those who acquired it doing so with much labour and many vigils, and by the blessing of God on their efforts, among whom were Origen,* surnamed Adamantius, from application he gave to his studies, six thousand of whose books Hieronimus tells us he had read, written against Rufinus,†

* Born at Alexandria, A.D. 185. At eighteen he became an eunuch to guard himself against calumny. In 211 he went to Rome, and afterwards to Palestine. Having aroused the jealousy of Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, the latter persecuted him for many years. In 237 he went to Greece, and then into Arabia. In 249 Decius persecuted the Christians, and cast Origen into prison. He died A.D. 254. He endeavoured to mould together the Christian religion and the doctrines of Plato. (See his book of "Principles.") He has been accused of denying the immortality of God, but he himself denies this most emphatically. Principal works (1) An Exhortation to Martyrdom; (2) Commentaries on Holy Scripture; (3) over 1,000 Sermons; (4) His "Principles." Of this we have only Rufinus's version. (5) Treatise against Celsius, considered the most finished apology for Christianity written by the ancients. The best criticism of his writings is "Ubi bene, nil melius; ubi male, nil pejus." He has been attacked by St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome, Theophilus of Alexandria, and Theodorus of Mopsuesta, but defended as warmly by St. Athanasius, Didymus of Alexandria, and St. Ambrose. The best edition of his works is that begun by Charles De la Rue, and continued by his nephew and namesake, four vols., folio, 1759.

† Born at Concordia in Italy, about A.D. 350. His princi-

to which fact, so far as Origen is concerned, Epiphanius* was witness. For, according to many accounts, the authors of which are unknown, which were composed and written in the reign of Antonius Caracalla,† and of Alexander,‡ the son of Mammæa, among the Jerichuntini and the Southern Neapolitans, probably by some of the friends of Origen, who had noticed his piety at Jerusalem. He wrote his celebrated works in four, six, and even eight languages, comparing them with the original Hebrew text; although many there were who admired only his Hebrew and his Greek. Amongst these were those I have just mentioned, Hieronimus and Epiphanius, “the many-tongued.” Besides these there were Isidorus,§ Albinus, the tutor of Charles the Great, which number we admit is a very small one, and, besides these, who are widely known, there are none, or very few, in the history of the Church. For of the rest we know, either at a former or

pal works were a translation of Josephus, a translation of some works of Origen, a translation and continuation of Eusebius, &c. The best edition of his works is that of Paris, 1580. Folio.

* Epiphanius was born A. D. 320. Was Bishop of Cyprus. Principal works: The Panarium, The Anchora, his “Treaty of Weights and Measures,” a work of great learning, but written without elevation of style or beauty. The best edition of his works is that of Peteau, 1622. Two vols., folio.

† Born A. D. 188; died 217.

‡ Alexander Severus. Born A. D. 208; died 235.

§ Of Pelusia. Died A. D. 440. Wrote five books of letters in Greek, which were edited in 1538 by Andrew Schot, folio.

later period, they were held in esteem among their fellow-men—although they only knew two languages—either from their zeal for religion or devotion to learning. To this catalogue also belong Aquila,* of Sinope; Symmachus,† the Samaritan, who lived under the Emperor Severus; Theodotion,‡ the Ephesian, who lived under Commodus; S. Lucianus,§ a great martyr for religion, whose four Greek versions of Scripture have been especially praised; Paul the Hermit, and others who, since they come nearer to our own age, are here omitted. But for that very reason the study of languages and, in short, the profession of them, began to be more generally cultivated, so much so, that there were always those who were capable of acquiring and communicating to others sacred and profane learning. The literature of the Greeks in truth, before 150 years, was reintroduced into Italy, from which it

* Also called Ponticus. Embraced Christianity A. D. 129, but, attached to Judicial Astrology, he was driven from the priesthood, and turned Jew. He translated the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. We possess very few fragments of this translation.

† A writer of the second century. Was born a Samaritan, became a Jew, then a Christian. We have but few fragments of his translation of the Bible.

‡ A disciple of Tatian, who held that there were two Gods, and founded the sect of the Encratites. He was received into the Jewish Synagogues on condition that he would translate the Old Testament into Greek, which he did, A. D. 185. He is not so correct as Aquila, having added or left out whole passages.

§ Priest of Antioch and martyr; was drowned A. D. 312, by order of Maximianus. He is accused of having favoured the Arians.

had been banished for 700 years, and this first introduction, as it were, occurred through the efforts of Chrysoloras, * Bessarion, † Gaza, ‡ Trapezontius, Chalcondyles, § Musurus, || Lascaris, ¶ and others, who, being fugitives from Greece, were hospitably received and liberally patronised by certain Italians, especially the family of the Medici. And,

* A learned Greek of the fifteenth century; became Professor of Greek at Pavia and Rome, and died at Constance in 1415, during the holding of the Council. Principal work, a Greek grammar (Ferrara, 1509), 8vo.

† Cardinal Patriarch of Constantinople; settled at Rome, and, it is said, would have been Pope had he not entered the Conclave unshaven, whereupon his enemy, Cardinal Alain, exclaimed, "What! shall that bearded goat be our Pope?" He formed a magnificent library, and founded a school, in which Theodore of Gaza, Valla, and Platina were students. He left his books to the Senate of Venice, in which town they still remain. His principal work was his defence of Plato, printed without a date, but probably in 1470: Zenophon "de dictis Socratis." He died in 1472, as Pierre Matthieu says, in consequence of an insult received from Louis XI. of France.

‡ The disciple of Bessarion. He translated Aristotle de Animalibus, the Aphorisms of Hippocrates, and Cicero de Senectute.

§ A native of Athens. Wrote a History of the Turks in ten books, from 1298 to 1462. This history is almost our sole authority for the fall of the Greek Empire and the rise of the Turkish power in Europe. A French translation by Vigenère was published in 1662. Two vols., folio.

|| Born in Candia; acquired an extraordinary reputation as Greek Professor at Venice; became Archbishop of Malvasia in Morea, where he died, 1517, aged 36 years. He produced the first editions of Aristophanes and Athenæus, and an Etymologicon Magnum Græcorum, Venice, 1499. Folio. Is one of the very rarest books in the world.

¶ Went to Italy after the taking of Constantinople. Was employed by Lorenzo de Medici to search for Greek MSS. He was afterwards made Professor of Greek at Rome by Leo X., where he died in 1535, aged 90. His epigrams are distinguished for vivacity and elegance.

indeed, on this occasion it penetrated even beyond the Alps, having in less than 100 years been carried to Basle, in Germany, by Andronicus Cantoblaca,* and to Paris, in France, by Hieronymus the Spartan, until John Capnion, † called in his own time the great master of the three languages, or the "three-tongued Phoenix," began to teach in Germany the Hebrew tongue at the same time as the Greek. And in his time in Spain also Ælius Antonius, ‡ of Lebixa, in the midst of wars restored the three languages, which some men reckon the chief and cardinal ones; a man who was followed by Jacobus Lopesius Stunica, § who was at one and

* A celebrated professor of Greek at the University of Basle.

† John Reuchlin (known also as Capnion, because *Reuch* in German and *Capnion* in Greek both mean smoke) was a brilliant Latin, Greek, and Hebrew scholar. It was said of him that Argyropilus said, with a sigh, "Græcia nostra exilio transvolavit Alpes." He taught Greek at Orleans and Poitiers, whence he returned to Swabia and was named a Triumvir of the Swabian League. He afterwards had serious quarrels with the theological college of Cologne, in consequence of which he withdrew to Ingolstadt, where he studied the cabalistic art of the Jews. He was by no means the first to do so, Raymond Martin, a leading Dominican, having set him the example in the 13th century. He left two works on the subject—"De Arte Cabalistica," folio, 1517, and "Artis Cabalisticæ Scriptores," folio, 1587. Many bibliographers have attributed to him the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum," but these belong more likely to Ulrich Hutten. The life of Reuchlin has been written by Maius, 1687, 8vo. He died in 1522, aged 67.

‡ Was born in 1424, and was one of the translators of the polyglot Bible of Cardinal Ximenes, for particulars regarding which see Dibdin's "Introduction to the Classics."

§ A Doctor of the University of Alcalá, who wrote severe criticisms on Erasmus. He died in 1530. I have

the same time a knight and a most learned theologian, and who also added to these Arabic. Nor was that study languidly pursued in Italy, where there flourished John Picus,* the Prince of Mirandola, the pupil of Dattylus the Rabbi, who lived at Turin, and his opponent, Mithridates the Roman; Ægidius† of Viterbo, and also his pupil Hieronymus‡ of Seripandus, Patricius of Naples;§ Hieronymus Aleander,|| and Frederick Fulgo-

reason to believe that he must have been related to that Diego Stunica, of Toledo, who wrote that strange commentary on the Book of Job.

* John Picus, Count of Mirandola, born in 1463, was a greater prodigy than the Admirable Crichton. Having studied at the principal universities of Europe, at eighteen years of age he spoke twenty-two languages, and sustained theses at Rome on every branch of science. To us, however, his learning seems but foolishness; his works are a haggis of absurd speculations, a wretched mixture of scholastic theology and peripatetic philosophy, with a smattering of geometry, plentifully watered with astrology. Amongst his 1,400 conclusions we find that an angel is infinite *secundum quid*; that animals and plants are born of corruption animated by productive virtue, and other examples of that elegant rhetorical figure known as rigmarole. He died in 1494, aged 31. His works were printed at Basle in 1573 and 1601, folio. One of the rarest of his productions is "Disputationes Adversus Astrologiam Divinatricem," Bologna, 1495, folio.

† A great linguist, professor at the University of Viterbo.

‡ Or Hieronymus of Saint-Foa; a Jew who embraced Christianity and attached himself to the Anti-Pope Benedict XIV. He wrote a celebrated treatise against the errors of the Talmud, which is said to have converted 5,000 Jews to Christianity. This treatise was printed in Frankfort in 1602.

§ Was secretary of Pius II. in 1460. He became Bishop of Pienza, in Tuscany.

|| Born 1480; became Rector of the University of Paris under Louis XII. He was one of Luther's principal opponents at the Diet of Worms in 1519. He was taken prisoner

sus,* two Archbishops, Senators of the Roman capital; Augustine Justinian† of Genoa, Bishop of Nebbio, of the Dominican order of monks, whose Psalter, printed in eight columns and as many languages, was very celebrated; Augustin Sten-chus‡ of Gubio, Bishop of Ghisaimo; Sanctes Pagninus§ of Lucca; Peter Galatin,|| a Minorcan, who defended Capnion against his Hochstratian adversaries, and their predecessors, Raymond Martin¶

in 1525 with Francis I. at the battle of Pavia, and at the sack of Rome by the Imperialists he saw from the ramparts of St. Angelo his house, furniture, and library reduced to ashes. He was made cardinal by Paul III. in 1538, but died four years later at the age of sixty-two. His principal works are a Greek and Latin lexicon, 1521, folio, and a Greek grammar 1517, octavo.

* Or Fregosus, Archbishop of Salerno, defended the coast of Genoa against Cortogli, a pirate of Barbary, whom he followed over to Tunis and defeated. He was made Cardinal in 1540 and died in the following year. He was a great Hebrew and Greek scholar, but no work of his, I believe, is known, except a treatise on prayer, in Italian, printed at Venice in 1540, octavo.

† Bishop of Nebbio, in Corsica; born 1470. His Psalter was written in Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Chaldee, with Latin versions, and was published in 1516.

‡ Born at Gubio, in the Duchy of Urbino, was first librarian of the congregation of the Saviour at Rome, then Bishop of Ghisaimo, in Candia.

§ Born 1470; was a Dominican celebrated for his knowledge of languages; died 1536. His principal works are, "Thesaurus Linguæ Sanctæ," published by Robert Estienne, at Paris in 1548, folio, and a translation of the Bible, published at Lyons in 1542, with notes by Servetus.

|| A Franciscan, whose work "De Arcanis Catholicæ Veritatis," against the Jews was once very celebrated.

¶ A Dominican, who was sent in 1264 by James I., King of Arragon, to examine the Talmud. He wrote a book entitled "Pugio Fidei Christianæ." He died about 1286. For further information consult Touron's "Histoire des Hommes Illustres de L'Ordre de St. Dominique," vol. i.

of Catalonia, and Porchetti,* the authors of the *Victoriæ*, and Pugio. And to all these must be added Marcellus II.† and Paul III.,‡ Roman pontiffs, along with the Ptolemys, nobles of Senna, Lactantius, the father, and Lælius and Æmilius, the sons, all distinguished for their knowledge of the sacred tongues. Nor should we pass over in Spain Ælius Antonius,§ the glory of the University of Salamanca, and the Cardinal Frances Ximenes,|| Abbot of Toledo, the Arch-Chancellor of the kingdom of Castille, who about the time when these which we have mentioned were done in Italy and Germany, opened at Complut a very rich and spacious refuge for the study of the aforesaid languages, and of all fine arts and sciences. He caused the sacred codices to be col-

* Porchetti de Silvaticus, a Genoese, who lived about 1315 and wrote a book against the Jews, "*Victoria Adversus Impios Hebræos.*" Paris, 1523, folio. Gothic print, very rare.

† Pope in 1555.

‡ Pope from 1534 to 1549.

§ Was in the service of Alphonso V., King of Arragon, by whom he was sent on an embassy to Venice.

|| Born in 1437; became confessor to Isabella, who conferred on him the Archbishopric of Toledo. Was created cardinal by Julius II., and became Prime Minister of Ferdinand the Catholic. At the head of an expedition he conquered Oran, in Africa. Ferdinand was jealous of the Cardinal, but notwithstanding conferred on him the regency of Castille. In 1516 Ximenes founded the University of Alcalá, and there printed the celebrated polyglot Bible; the work was begun in 1505 and completed in 1517; it is in six vols. folio, and written in four languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Chaldee. The whole cost was borne by Ximenes, and it must have been gigantic, as he paid 4,000 crowns for seven Hebrew codices alone. He died aged 81.

lated, whether written in his own language or translated into any other, at immense expense, and had them splendidly printed. To a certain degree also praise is due to Pelicanus, Munster,* Fagius,† Germans, to William Pöstell,‡ who, when he had been for many years Professor of Languages and Regius Professor of Mathematics in the University of Paris, following the practice of the old philosophers, wandered over the more celebrated shores of Africa and Asia, and the eastern coasts of Europe. And it is proved by his edited writings, that he became master of fifteen languages. Mention likewise ought to be made of Comivictus, a Spaniard and Christian Jew, who was skilled in fifteen languages, Petrus Lusitanus, a man most dear to the kings of Æthiopia, who besides the Arabic, Indian, and Portuguese tongues, is reported to have been acquainted with the languages of almost all men; of Theodorus

* Sebastian Munster, a monk who followed Luther, married and settled at Hiedleberg, then at Basle; was surnamed the Esdras and Strabo of Germany. Died 1552.

† Born 1504; was called to England by Cranmer and became Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge; died 1550.

‡ Born 1510 in Normandy, was educated at St. Barbe, and being noticed by Francis I. was sent by him to the East. On his return he was named professor at the university. Fell absurdly in love with an old maid, and wrote a book proving that she was to complete the redemption of the souls of women. He declared that he had died and come to life again. With all his follies he was one of the most learned men of his age. He wrote on almost every possible subject, from the formation of the Phœnician language to sonnets to his love's grey hair. He died 1581.

Bibliandros,* who, a German himself, fairly boasts in his commentary on the unity of all languages and letters, that, by the grace and gift of God, he had acquired the power of writing and speaking, or at any rate understanding, those languages which are spread far and wide over the whole world.

Amongst these, and in the same school, must surely be reckoned the great Luther and the saintly Melancthon, "whom the blue-eyed goddess Minerva both girt and adorned;" Caspar Cruciger,† John Draconites,‡ and others, whose memory is held by us in everlasting respect. Thus by the assistance and service of all these, whom I have mentioned to their honour, there grew up again in the universities, owing to their acuteness of intellect and their wonderful industry, that study of various languages which in the earliest ages once flourished in the schools, which were, one may say, Latin-speaking colonies,

* Born at Zell; was Professor of Theology at Zurich, where he died in 1564. His principal works are an edition of the Koran, with notes, Rostock, 1638, quarto; a collection of ancient writings on Mahometanism, folio, 1543; the latter contains some curious documents and information about Mahomet.

† A Protestant theologian of Leipsic, died in 1548, aged 45. He is only known to us by his Commentaries on the Holy Scriptures.

‡ A Protestant minister of Carlstadt in Franconia, who undertook a polyglot Bible, which he did not live to complete, in Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, Latin, and German. His numerous works are now quite neglected, although they contain some literary criticism of undoubted merit.

founded throughout almost the whole of Europe by immigrants to such an extent that Palestine Syria, and even Greece, lost within their own borders their ancient reputation and renown for both literature and learning. Thus, then, it is clear that never at any period since the Christian era have there been so many in Europe skilled and instructed in Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek literature as there are in our day within the universities of Germany, France, Italy and Spain. Now is this not indeed, as I have so freely called it, a great miracle? Undoubtedly both that of which I have already spoken and that of which I am about to speak, although commonly and generally known, do not appear as yet to have excited much wonder, even among the most intelligent of men, but to have been considered by them merely as ordinary events to be remembered. Owing, however, to our indolence, they can only be attributed to an Eternal and Divine Providence, and ought they not therefore to be accepted by us in the light of miracles? But of the first topic enough has now been said; let us pass on to the next.

Now, it is universally allowed that sea-voyages are of a very high antiquity, and although different discoverers are everywhere given by different writers, and though on this point there is an absence of agreement between Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny, Eusebius, Clemens, Tertullian, Tibullus,

and others, yet, having regard to the authority of the sacred writings and of Josephus, there is no doubt but we ought justly to believe that the art of navigation and of shipbuilding was derived from Noah or Janus, before whom nowhere is it recorded that the sea had been ventured on. And, although some would be so exacting as to raise a dispute about the Ark of Noah, yet who is not intelligent enough as not to perceive that their wrangling is of a petulant character, not to use a harsher word, rather than that any learned weight should be allowed to such cavilling,* as at length I shall openly explain the matter as it stands. That which the sacred writings and Josephus term the Ark, having been built of wood, was without doubt nothing else than a ship, as indeed Berosus,† the Chaldean, upon the evidence of the same Josephus, names it. But I will not waste time in either referring to or refuting trifles of this sort, but shall go on to point out the antiquity of navigation. This opens an ocean of conjecture, should one feel willing to embark on it. The accounts

* What would Albinus have said of modern commentators?

† A priest of the temple of Belus, at Babylon; was a contemporary of Alexander the Great, and the author of a history of Chaldea, which is lost, but of which some fragments are found in Josephus. The Athenians raised a statue to him having a tongue of gold. The fiction published under his name by Annius of Viterbo, and the five books of antiquities printed at Antwerp in 1545, are apocryphal.

are well known which writers on natural history give of the nautilus and the ozenes, of the genus *Polypus*, and of the neritides of the *Pectines*, and how they would have it that the science of navigation was borrowed from these. Now, to commence with, the most remote traces of such events are the voyages of Minos, Neptune, Atlas, and Danaus, as is proved from the works of Strabo, Diodorus, Clemens, Pliny; so old, indeed, that stories and proverbs had arisen out of them in their turn as lasting as the names of the places. Old, too, are the discoveries of *Æolus*, *Dædalus*, *Eupolemius*,* *Anacharsis*, *Jason*, *Amocles* of Corinth, *Nesichthon* of Salamis, *Xenagoras* of Syracuse, *Nesigito*, *Alexander the Great*, *Ptolemy Soter*, *Demetrius*, *Antigonus*, *Philopater*,† *Hippius* of Tyre, and others. Among the sailors of antiquity there must be classed, not undeservedly, the *Mysians*, *Trojans*, *Samothracians*, and the *Tyrians*, of whom Strabo writes and Tibullus thus sings:—

“Utque maris vastum prospectet Turibus æquor,
Prima ratem ventis credere docta, Tyros.”‡

There ought also to be added the *Egyptians*,

* An Athenian, who perished about 440 B.C., in a naval combat against the Lacædemonians.

† Ptolemy Philopater, thus satirically called from his having poisoned his father.

‡ “Tyre, that it might survey the vast expanse of the deep from its towers, was first taught to entrust its navy to the winds.”

Phœnicians, Erythræans, Cyrenians, Rhodians, Cyprians, Athenians, Carthaginians, and Tuscan Thasians. But of all these it is no part of our purpose to speak. Most renowned, however, are the voyages of the sailors of Solomon the King, regarding which an account will be fully given a little farther on; of Nearchus* the Macedonian; of Jamboldus, a Grecian merchant; of Hanno,† the Carthaginian, all in the Indian and Atlantic seas: likewise of the fleet which was sent out by the Emperor Augustus into the Southern Ocean. But all these have long ago been surpassed by the commercial enterprises of our own times; accordingly we must now hold them in contempt in comparison with enterprises of much greater importance. I allude to the wonderful voyages of the Spaniards, commenced about 100 years ago, and afterwards, as is the case in almost all things, continued up to the present age, followed up, and brought to perfection; for nothing, not even a science, ever

* A captain of Alexander the Great, who was sent by him to navigate on the Indian Ocean. He followed the coast from the mouth of the Indus to Harmusia, now Ormuz (an island in the north of the Persian Gulf). His account of his journey is extremely curious. Ormuz was the great emporium of the Portuguese for the wealth of the Indus from 1507 to 1622.

† A Carthaginian general, sent to circumnavigate Africa about 570 B.C. He was prevented accomplishing this by want of provisions. His apocryphal narrative was published with learned notes at Leyden in 1674, by Henry Bekler.

remains stationary. Adventurous assuredly are the Spaniards as a race, who, having heard from the conversation of many that the feat was impossible, immediately attempted it; venturous especially were the sailors of one ship, who feared not to go round the vast globe, far and wide as it extends, which adventure we shall by and by allude to. And this history I will relate from its beginning. I know that it will prove a very interesting subject to every intelligent reader. For it was the origin of the discovery of the New Indies.

A certain ship, sailing I know not where in the Atlantic Ocean, during the prevalence of a violent storm, was furiously driven by the wind then blowing strong from the east,* to an unknown land,† and one not set down in any book of cosmography. The master of that ship, along with three or four companions, exhausted with hunger and want, at length with difficulty succeeded in steering to the island of Madeira, situated in the Portuguese Sea. There lived at that time on the island Christopher Colonus, whom some improperly name Columbus. He being a man not of great fortune but of decided genius, moderately instructed in Latin, but deeply versed in cosmo-

* This ship was probably sailing down the coast of Africa, and being blown off by the wind, locally known as the Harmattan (see Laughton, p. 15), was driven into the N.E. Trade, and was unable to get back.

† Probably Barbadoes.

graphy, having come into Portugal from Liguria * (for he was a Ligurian), had married a wife from the island of Madeira. In his house that shipwrecked captain alone was hospitably received, for his associates had left him immediately on entering the harbour. But as he felt that death was creeping upon him, he handed over to Colonus certain cosmographic writings, and the whole plan of that deadly cruise, and a description of the unknown lands to which the waves had driven him, and under the terror of death disclosed to him the whole matter, which up to that time he had kept a secret, and immediately after he expired. Colonus accordingly, now entertaining lofty aspirations, began to rouse himself seriously to those projects which long before he had dreamt of, viz., to seek for the rich Cipangus of Marco Polot and the land of the Antipodes. For he had been led to apply his mind to the solution of the question from some passages of Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Crates, † quoted by Strabo, as also from the writings of Strabo himself, Pliny, Virgil, Seneca, and the others, from whose separate testimonies this most sagacious man had gathered and learned

* The coast between Nice and Genoa.

† A Venetian by birth: travelled in Tartary with his father and uncle, and on his return to Italy in 1295 wrote an account of his journey and seventeen years' residence at the court of the Grand Khan, which was first printed at Venice in 1496. 8vo.

‡ A disciple of Diogenes the Cynic, lived about 328 B.C.

that there were still lands and islands unknown to the men of his own time ; and the evidences which seemed to most others worthless, he not only accepted, but was bent on putting to the proof. In truth, the reasoning was such as might have been sufficient to satisfy any one of us not plainly dull and stupid of the credibility of that, which this most fortunate man saw to be true, and of the possibility of once for all determining that the New World, in short, had not been wholly unknown to the ancients. And this inquiry is assuredly full of interest and delight, and I think it was clearly solved and settled by Colonus in his own mind, before he entered upon a task of such difficulty. For the name itself of New World bears on its face that the ancients knew nothing or little about so many of those islands and countries which have been discovered almost within the space of 100 years, especially when in most commentaries of the ancients a deep silence is maintained in regard to them. Yet this man observed that it was of some importance to have the testimonies of so many philosophers, poets, geographers, grammarians, I might also add of the sacred writings, which seemed clear to him, and accordingly examined those ancient voyages, which without doubt took place, and did not in the least scruple to turn them to use. But let us look into those ancient authors, whom we have just named in order that we may the more approve

Of the resolve of Colonus, and the less wonder at its issue and success, for in the end he was successful. To begin, then, with the sacred writings: we know that in the 9th chapter of the third Book of Kings, mention is made of the island of Ophir, from which the fleet of Solomon and Hiram brought 40 talents of silver and gold to Solomon. For by that passage there are some who understand the New Indies, while others interpret it as referring to Hispaniola* in the same New World towards the west, which, they add, was called Ophir, from a descendant of Heber, from whom he was the tenth in descent. Now I shall add no more from these writings. Homer (*Odyssey*, i. 23) thus writes: *αιθιοπας τοι διχθαι δεδαιαται, εσχαλοι ανδρων*: "The Æthiopians, who are divided into two races, the furthest removed of men." That this can with difficulty be understood of the Æthiopians of Africa, that they ought to be reckoned a double people, and that Homer had in view the western island, will appear from what follows. And Strabo himself, in his first book, speaking of the opinion of Crates, affords this explanation, according to Xylander:† "Just as

* Better known as San Domingo.

† William Xylander was born at Oxburg in 1532, and became Professor of Greek at Heidelberg. His works are not to be depended on, for, notwithstanding his learning, he fell into numerous errors, owing to the rapidity of his composition, being, from his poverty, obliged to write for a living.

those men are called by us Æthiopians, placed towards the south, on the extremity of the inhabited world, dwell on the borders of the ocean, so it is thought that there must be on the further side of the ocean certain other Æthiopians, the outposts of the rest of the world, who in the other temperate zone likewise dwell by the ocean. In this way there is a twin race divided into two tribes." Thus Strabo writes. But one may readily credit that Colonus, the first investigator and discoverer of the West Indies, was especially encouraged by the passage of Plato in his *Timæus*,* where Socrates is introduced conversing with the Athenians to the following effect: "Your State is reported in former times to have withstood innumerable forces of enemies, who setting out from that Atlantic sea had overrun well-nigh the whole of Europe and Asia. For then the strait of the Pillars of Hercules was navigable, having at its mouth and, as it were, in its very porch an island larger than Africa or Asia, by means of which there was free access to the other neighbouring islands, and from them to the entire continent, lying out of sight in the vicinity of the true sea. That portion of the deep was a real sea, that land was similarly in truth a continent. But after this,

* Born at Locria, in Italy, was a disciple of Pythagoras, maintained that there was a Supreme Intelligence which had produced the world and governed it. His principal work was a treatise on Nature, written in the Doric dialect, and which is inserted by Plato in his *Timæus*.

through the operation of an immense earthquake and the sinking of a range of mountains during a day and night, it happened that the yawning of the earth swallowed up all those warlike men of yours, and the island of Atlantis was buried under a vast whirlpool. And in this way that sea has remained unnavigable by reason of the shallow caused by the absorbed island." Thus far Plato. Certainly all this description so accords with that of the land afterwards discovered by the Spaniards, that, if the Atlantic Ocean could be held to be bounded by as great a space as that great island is said to have measured, we should discover that one egg would not more resemble another. He tells almost the same story in a passage of the "Critias," which I prudently pass over. Aristotle, in the little book on the wonderful things heard of in nature, also tells those things which a learned man, taking a wide view of the subject, must not pass over in silence. "Beyond the Pillars of Hercules," says he, according to Pircamerus, "in that sea which is called the Atlantic, they give out that a certain island had been formerly discovered by Carthaginian merchants, inhabited at that time by none except wild beasts, and, moreover, that it was richly wooded and clothed with many trees, in other parts full of very large rivers most suitable for navigation, endued with a certain incredible fertility of all growing things, but separated by a voyage of several days from the con-

tinient ; and some Carthaginian merchants having happened to reach it, and being captivated with the fertility of its soil and the mildness of its climate, there took up their abode. The story goes that the Carthaginians, troubled on account of that proceeding, issued a decree under public authority that no one, under pain of death, should ever after dare to sail there, and those who were now there they ordered to be immediately killed, lest the fame of the island itself should reach other nations, and they should be subjected to some stronger power, and that it should become as it were a standing menace against their liberties." And in the same book, as the same translator renders it : "The general report is that the Phœnicians, who occupy the frontiers of Gades,* having sailed for four days beyond the Pillars of Hercules, being driven by a very strong wind called Apeliotes, at length landed at certain places, uncultivated in short and deserted, but full of much mud, and almost continuously disturbed by earthquakes. That these, when the tide was low, could be easily observed, but on its return they were lost to view, and in these they declare they found an incredible number of tunny fish of wonderful size and bulk. Then that gins began to be prepared by them, with which they might be taken, and being taken they cut them to pieces,

* Cadiz.



and that their flesh gradually became dry, and at length being placed in jars they brought them to Carthage. But that they were not exported by the Carthaginians farther from the state, but were rather consumed at home for the reason that they consider fishes of this sort in their banquets to prove them to be personages of dignity and excellence."

Virgil also, in the Sixth Book of the *Æneid*, sings : "There lies beyond the stars an earth, beyond the ways of the year and the sun, where heaven-bearing Atlas bears on his shoulder the axis fit for the burning stars."* And it is true Servius interprets this as referring to *Æthiopia* of the Moors, in which country Mount Atlas is, but without doubt it ought to be understood of the Atlantic island of Plato, which the most learned poet writes of as stretching beyond the Zodiac as far to the north as to the south. What is there, then, which hinders us from supposing that America was known at that time likewise? It is worth mention that there is the additional evidence of Pliny, who in his Second Book, chapter 67, writes : "That in his time the whole Western Ocean had been traversed from Cadiz and the Pillars of Hercules, skirting the coasts of

* "Jacet extra sidera tellus,
Extra anni solisque vias, ubi cœlifer Atlas
Axem humero torquet, stellis ardentibus aptum."
Æneid VI.

Spain and the Gauls, but that the Northern Ocean had in greater part been explored under the auspices of Augustus." He adds: "That his grandson, Cornelius, has recorded that one Eudoxus, in his own time fleeing from Ptolemy Lathyrus, passed out of the Arabian Gulf, was borne as far as Cadiz, and long before him that he had met face to face Cœlius Antipater, who had sailed from Spain into Æthiopia on a commercial adventure. He says that the same grandson relates regarding the Northern passage that the Indies had been presented to Q. Metellus Celer, the colleague of C. Afranius in the Consulship, but then Pro-Consul in Gaul, by the King of the Suevi, who, while on a commercial voyage from India, had been carried by storms into Germany." This evidence he furnishes. So far Pliny. What, moreover, is to be thought of the narrative of Strabo, which he gives in his Second Book regarding the wanderings of Menelaus, King of the Greeks, according to Aristonicus the Grammarian, who says that he sailed past Cadiz to India, fixing the duration even of his wanderings, he having returned on the eighth year; and of the other notice, which is in the same book of the voyage of Eudoxus, which, as it is too long, I here pass over. To these we must add Seneca, who thus speaks of ships: "There will come late ages, in which the ocean will relax the bonds of things, and Typhis will discover new globes,

and the immense world will be laid open, nor will Thule be the end of the world."*

These passages and others, without doubt, stimulated Colonus, so that what others considered foolishness, he, being a man of wisdom, firmly believed would contribute to his supreme happiness, and everlasting fame and good fortune. He therefore despatched his brother, Bartholomew Colonus, to the most serene King of England, Henry VII., whose kingdom was then at peace and flourishing, to point out to him that if ships and money were given him by the King, he would, after having discovered the new and gold-producing regions, render the kingdom of England by far the most flourishing of all the kingdoms of Europe. Having here suffered a repulse, he next made trial of Alphonso V., King of Portugal. But, as that king was now at war with the inhabitants of the southern coasts of Africa, and was commencing to open up a way towards Calicut, the unlucky Colonus obtained from him just as much as from the other. But not yet did he allow his spirits to sink. Trying his luck the third time with Ferdinand the Catholic, who was then impeded by his war in Granada, using all the influence at his command to accomplish

* Venient annis secula seris,
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
Laxet, novosque Typhis deteget orbes,
Atque ingens pateat tellus,
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.

his desired end, he at length realised his wish, after the Moors had been overcome and driven from Spain. Sixteen thousand ducats were granted him by the King,* and a fleet of three ships merely, with twelve companions. This scanty equipment afterwards achieved so great and unheard of results, as the Indies this day prove. The brave Colonus, exposing himself with his diminutive fleet to the vast sea, set sail from Spain on August 6, 1492. After proceeding on his course for several days, such an exuberance of grass floating over the sea met the fleet, and surrounded it on all sides, that they seemed to sail as it were in meadows green with herbage. Whence he believed, I might almost say feared, that those things were true which he had read about the submerged Atlantis in Plato. Nevertheless, at length emerging from the grassy sea, after many dangers and enduring the extremity of hunger, he was borne along with his companions among the unknown lands he was in quest of, regions inhabited by a race naked, barbarous, and unarmed, but rich in gold. When he inquired of the natives about Cipangus, of which he had always dreamed, they showed by signs that the name of the country was Cibao. The mention of the name, which he accidentally came across a

* It should not be forgotten that Columbus obtained nothing from Ferdinand, and that the whole cost of his first expedition was borne by Queen Isabella.



second time, made him think that the chain of evidence was complete. Immediately he loads two ships (for the third had perished, having been dashed upon the rocks), with gold, gems, ten Indian men, a number of turtle, many parrots of diverse colour, and many other barbarous trophies, and at length returns to the king in triumph on April 6 of the following year. The king was greatly delighted, and received Colonus with signal marks of respect, so that *admiring* him, men soon came to call him *Admiral*.* He presented him with a patent of nobility, and the most honourable title of Viceroy of the Indies, with the twelfth † of the whole wealth which might accrue from the expedition and the subjugation of the Indians, and with a much larger fleet instantly sent him back to the quarter from which he had returned.

Such was the rise, such were the first beginnings, of the great and wonderful undertakings which were afterwards carried out in the New Indies, commonly called America, and are described more fully in Spanish histories than elsewhere. This new investigation of the New World, or rather of a new part of the world sprung up, an investigation which up to that time lay concealed from

* We call the reader's attention to this specimen of a 15th century joke!

† Most authorities concur in fixing Columbus's share at one-tenth.

many, from their ignorance of the Spanish language (since these accounts are said to exist in no other language), and thus it was that among the first Hugo Blotius,* a most illustrious man, and the Imperial Librarian, considered it a worthy task to cull for the benefit of his readers these few facts from the true histories written in Spanish. Now to Colonus is attributed the discovery of the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, Cubagua,† as also of Verragua, and Vraba, Provinces of the Indian Continent.‡

While the influence of the Spaniards was increasing more and more among the New Indians, others, impelled by the hope of wealth, considered how to attempt some new project or other. The outcome accordingly was that after Amerigo Vesputius, following Colonus the Genoese, by order of the King of Castile, had entered, in the year 1667, that very region, and had given it the name of America, other voyages in succession were planned; for under Charles V. there followed Ferdinand Cortez, who opened up New Spain and the Mexican Kingdom of Montezuma; and Vasco Nunez Valboa discovered the Austral Sea, § which

* Blotius, or Louis de Blois, born A.D. 1507, was educated with Charles V. of Spain, and afterwards became a Benedictine monk. Died 1566.

† A small island between Margarita and Venezuela.

‡ The first landfall made by Columbus was Watling Island, otherwise called San Salvador, in the Bahamas.

§ Or Pacific.

is commonly called the Del Sur Sea, just as also Francis Pizarro discovered Peru, the immense kingdom of Attabaliba ; Magellan the strait called after his own name ; Pontius of Leghorn, the Province of Florida ; and Fernandez, Yucatan. But memorable and distinguished in a signal degree was the expedition of Ferdinand Magellan, a man of Portuguese extraction, to whom the Magellanic Strait brought in a single voyage both immortal renown and death. For he, fired by the munificence of the King of Spain, revolted from his own king and fled to him for refuge, persuading him that if money and ships were granted him he would not desist from his expedition until he should die or discover some other channel, and lay open a passage by a very different route than that by which the Portuguese (for they in their navigation tend towards the East) find their way to the Moluccas, islands rich in all kinds of aromatic plants. The King granted him a fleet of five ships, supplies, equipments, and 213 men. Accordingly, in the year 1619, he commits himself to the vast sea, directing his course to the coast of Peru, then skirting the shores to the South, after some sharp misfortunes, one ship having been sent and another returning to Spain against his will, he at last found the strait he had expected ; but thereafter changing his course in a westerly direction to the Moluccas, he fell in with different islands,*

* Ladrones and Philippines ; he was killed in the latter.

never seen, read about, or heard of before. While he attempts to make war upon them, the wretched man is stabbed and torn to pieces by the barbarians; and having likewise lost many of his men, he was thus unable to enjoy the glory which was due to so illustrious an exploit. Yet none the less zealously did his associates* who survived pursue the voyage as planned, and after visiting nations standing with their feet opposite to us, they arrived at the Moluccas. From thence they returned home, not by the same route by which they had come, but that they might settle the passage round, formerly dreamt of, and make an entire circuit of the globe. They, in short, continued their voyage to the West; and in this voyage, directed westwards according to the sun, it was observed also that they themselves had outrun in time six hours a year, which renders the month of February to us every fourth year one day longer, and at the beginning of the fourth year nearly an entire day would have been thus taken out of the Nautical Ephemeris. When they were wafted into the harbour of Hispalensis on September 7, they should have deemed it September 8, in accordance with the most accurate reckoning; and by this wonderful occurrence we ourselves must necessarily confess that power has been acquired for the measurements not only of the ocean but even of the

* One vessel and eighteen men.

sun.* The voyage, however, proved unfortunate to themselves, as out of five ships one, the *Victory*, survived; and out of 223 men one only, John from Canum, the master of the same ship, and nineteen sailors† returned, to the unbounded joy of the Spanish, and even of the Portuguese king, after sailing over 12,000 of our miles, and six times traversing the torrid zone without injury, which the old philosophers and poets represented as a feat impracticable on account of the heat. The circuit was accomplished in thirty months.

Had the experience of things then overweighed contemplative philosophy? Have we clearly apprehended the situation of the world of the ancient philosophers? And, if so, why are we not permitted to judge of other matters on which we are now silent? The errors of the ancients are well known. Metrodorus,‡ Heraclides,§ and certain Pythagorean philosophers have asserted that the worlds, that is, the globes of land and

* Albinus was evidently neither a Galileo nor Tycho Brahe.

† According to Chandon, who had consulted the MS. log in the possession of Antonio Moreno, the cosmographer of the Contractation of Seville, only eighteen men returned in all. Readers who may wish to read an abridgment of this log will find it in the collections of Ramusius.

‡ A philosopher of Scepsis, who afterwards entered the service of Mithridates, King of Pontus, who ultimately put him to death.

§ Born at Ephesus, about 530 B.C. We have some fragments of his works left which were first printed by Stephen in his "Poesis Philosophica," 1573, together with those of Democritus, Timo, and others.

water are very many. When Alexander the Great himself heard Anaxarchus* the Philosopher discussing the point, and seriously believed what was said, the King, bursting into tears, lamented that he was not yet lord of one world. Some there have been who fixed the number of worlds at seven; others at nineteen; others, again, at a thousand. But it is certain that men were in existence who, in a former age, were convinced that each single star was a separate world—nay, who thought that the cloudy space which is perceived in the moon was full of men, animals, trees, mountains, and rocks. What, pray, can be found more ridiculous than such men? What, in the name of Heaven, moved them, when they had explored almost no portion of the world in which they were placed, to dream that there were worlds where they could not penetrate, I will not say with their bodies, but not even with their intellects? Again, as to those who were content with one world, there were some who insisted that one half was habitable and inhabited, among whom were Thales and Aristotle, and with these almost all the other philosophers who speculated on the habitability of the world; for, when they divided the whole globe into five zones, and laid down that the two extreme ones, by reason of the

* A sceptic philosopher, favourite of Alexander the Great, whom Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, caused to be crushed to death in a huge mortar.

cold, and the middle, that is, the torrid zone, by reason of the heat, were neither inhabited nor habitable, it was inferred that the one of the two remaining zones in our hemisphere and the other in the opposite one were habitable. They admitted, therefore, that men could dwell even beyond the torrid zone. And whence could they come to the knowledge of that, if no crossing from the one to the other was possible? Another absurd conclusion also followed, that those who dwelt beyond the torrid zone must derive their origin from other than our own first parents, Adam and Eve. But experience, the mistress of everything, has refuted the false assertion of all of them. And, indeed, as regards the northern region of the world, Galeotus of Narni,* Saxo Grammaticus,† Olaus Magnus,‡ have left witness, in tracts that they have written, that the Hyperboreans and the dwellers in Scandinavia and other regions lying far to the north can not only endure the cold, but

* A professor of literature at the University of Padua, and afterwards secretary to Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary. The book alluded to here in his "De Incognitio Vulgo," published 1479, for the opinions expressed in which he was reprimanded by the Inquisition. Died 1492.

† Born in the Island of Zealand. He wrote a history of the Northern nations to 1186 which was well known to Shakespeare.

‡ Born 1493; became Bishop of Zagrate and Chancellor of Hungary. His principal works are his Chronicle, his description of Hungary, and his History of Attila, the latter of which seems to me to have been familiar to Gibbon, although a work of very rare occurrence. It was printed at Prestsburg, 1538. Olaus died 1568.

even live comfortably and attain a green old age. The best island forsooth, and the most healthy one of the whole north, is situated very near to the Arctic Pole, beyond Iceland and Greenland. And Martin Frobisher, an Englishman, in his voyage into the regions of the west and north, planned and accomplished in the year 1476, unmistakably points out that in those regions most adjacent to the Arctic Pole there exist many men, barbarians, who have large, well-proportioned frames, and are yet subjected to almost perpetual cold. Nor was he silent on this point who described the navigation of Frobisher: "The ancients wandered from the truth when they believed that the two zones included within the polar circles were uninhabitable, on account of the great and continual cold and the very severe climate." For he goes on to say that "he, with his companions, through the kindness of God, had had an utterly different experience, and had become habituated to the climate; that, in short, the region was not only habitable, but inhabited by men, it is true, savage, stupid, untamed, and deficient, as it were, in the gift of reason, and although those northern regions are covered with perpetual snow and ice, and the rays of the sun, through their feebleness and not being reflected by the earth, are unable to melt these; yet, nevertheless, that an all-good and all-mighty God, who gave the earth to be inhabited by man, with

His infinite and wonderful goodness and power, had so tempered those regions likewise, which were falsely believed to be uninhabitable, that men could exist in them." These words are from his history. Now the whole of that part which lies under the torrid zone and stretches to the south has been so surveyed in the voyages of the Spaniards that scarce any—even the smallest— island has remained unexplored. And the foregoing from the accounts of the ancients I have thought it right to add, for a corollary, as it were, to this narrative of new and unheard-of voyages among the early races. On the same principle I would now furnish a short review from the history of the voyages of Cortez, Balboa, Pizarro, Pontius, and other, were I not anxious for brevity.

Wherefore, laying aside the subject of navigation for the present, by way of peroration, I exhort the studious youth of Germany to betake themselves to the study of foreign languages as one of the most laudable, and, as has been shown, even miraculous, for which, without doubt, God, with that great love with which He watches over the race of man, and in an especial degree the Church, has awakened a zeal in these latest times. But I, single-handed, will not do this. For I will call in to my aid a friendly orator, the divine and most illustrious Pericles of the Germans, the Rev. D. Luther, who in his work on the Settling of Schools, after admirably singing

the praises of languages, excellently examines why the most bitter enemy of men in general, and of the Church in particular, the wicked Genius, should have desired so often to prevent the spread of languages, and why the recalling to the light of day and acquiring the knowledge of tongues should prove a very unwelcome guest to the devil, since he knew quite well that the Gospel was revealed to the Church by the complete knowledge of languages, and was retained within her by the instrumentality of the same; how also in the time of the disciples of Christ the Greek and Latin languages were promulgated far and wide over the globe, and, before our times, Greece, being occupied by the Turks, the Greek language began to be dispersed and taught throughout the then known world by fugitives; and therefore as dear as is the revelation of the word and the truth, as dear as is the Gospel, so dear to us ought to be the study of languages, so dear the preservation of the same, since it is most certain that we will never with advantage retain the light of heavenly learning, except by their aid. And many other arguments he in the same book most beautifully advances to the commendation of languages, viz., that their loss has always been followed by darkness in the Church, that in the ages even of the most holy fathers errors crept in from inacquaintance with languages, and he adduces the expositions which were given

by them in their character of interpreters of Holy Scripture, unacquainted as they were with languages. In short, between the learned interpreters of Councils and of Scripture, between Aglot theologians and others with the knowledge of languages, there is a mighty difference. And in this dissertation, at once most learned and pious, he inserts also this encomium: "Languages are in place of scabbards, in which the sword Spirit, namely, the Word of God, is kept sheathed. They are the ark, or the secret repositories, which preserve this noble treasure locked up in it. They are the cups, in which we receive and carry round the health-giving drink. They are the cells ever ready, from which the worthy preacher brings forth the Gospel bread. And, as the sacred writings themselves indicate, they are the baskets in which the loaves and the fragments remaining are placed, so that they may not perish." "And if," explains this great man and faithful adviser, "languages slip away from us through our carelessness as we breathe supinely on our backs (may our lot refute the words spoken!), we ought to be wholly in fear lest we should lose not only the Gospels, but glide on again to the miseries such that we do not know clearly how to speak, and to write correctly, not only Latin, but even the vernacular, which was the case with our ancestors." If you will listen, therefore, to this Father and Teacher of yours,

and, in humble gratitude and acceptableness to God, duly render loyal service, you will each one of you for his own part, and with a good conscience, and not to your own honour and worldly advantage, see that in the Government, Christian as much as Civil, the oxen of Cyprus, and the hogs of Acarnania, that is, most brutish men, shall not assume the administration of affairs, but that always the most virtuous and learned, and only those who have received the most liberal education shall be deemed capable of admission to public offices, and that their measures shall be attended with a happy issue. Wherefore, I beseech you, as far as you can, strive with all your might, with sails and with steeds, and in a direct course, towards the true glory of learning, which is hidden in the study of languages, neglecting the clamours of I care not whom ; treat with equanimity, spurn, regard as nought the labour of such a short space of time as you have to spend here ; so prepare yourselves, that not only from this trifling exertion, which must be borne, you may rather live happy and honoured in future ages, than in return for a short and fleeting pleasure, which most falsely think consists in base ease and sloth, ever wretched, be deservedly laughed at by the learned, despised, held in no esteem, and compelled, as it were, to be plunged in perpetual regret, but also, which is the chief point, be able to feel glad and rejoice

in the Church of Christ, and the sovereign good of ourselves and others. If you pursue this path with fervent mind, God Almighty will second your just efforts, will enlarge your understanding, will add strength, will rouse your will, and thereupon will supply to us with unsparing hand all good things in this world ; and at last, after this frail and fading body has been laid in the ground, your mind, than which nothing more excellent in life has been given us by God, will rise aloft from this workshop of toil, to that final home of the blessed, where, in the enjoyment of perpetual felicity, it will, through never-ending ages, be glad, exult, rejoice, and, in the sight of the Divine Essence, will delight and refresh itself, and experience and feel new pleasure, stable and sure, and such as will overcome all the dross of human intellect, without break and without end. Which may God grant us !















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